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Fall 2006

Book Review of *Discovering North American Rock Art* Edited by Lawrence L. Loendorf, Christopher Chippindale, and David S. Whitley

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Sundstrom, Linea, "Book Review of *Discovering North American Rock Art* Edited by Lawrence L. Loendorf, Christopher Chippindale, and David S. Whitley" (2006). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 835.

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Discovering North American Rock Art. Edited by Lawrence L. Loendorf, Christopher Chippindale, and David S. Whitley. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005. x + 334 pp. Photographs, figures, maps, tables, notes, references, index. \$55.00 cloth.

If readers of *Great Plains Research* are seeking a window on rock art research in North America, this book provides a few clear panes, a few that are hazy, and a few muddy ones. Like many edited volumes, the weaker contributions and lack of a consistent style limit the book's usefulness. Some authors target a general readership; others clearly are addressing colleagues.

The book has two stated themes: the history of rock art research in North America and recent approaches to rock art analysis. Articles by Julie Francis and (jointly) David Whitley and Jean Clottes explore why rock art research has long been marginalized in North America. Unfortunately, both of these otherwise observant essays slip into advocacy of shamanism as a unifying or primary explanation for rock art, an interpretive model by no means universally accepted by today's rock art specialists.

More balanced and well-referenced are Kelly Hayes-Gilpin's thought-provoking essay on various responses to gender-linked rock art in the Far West, Todd Bostwick's thorough bibliographic essay on Southwestern rock art research, and Jan Simek and Alan Cressler's review of recent work on caves in the American Southeast. Carol Diaz-Granados and James Duncan, Michael Klassen, and Johannes Loubser pick up the theme of applying ethnography in rock art interpretation. These three articles, together with Hayes-Gilpin's, illustrate the importance of ethnographic approaches to understanding rock art symbolism. Klassen's article focuses on a Great Plains site, Writing-on-Stone, and a Great Plains people, the Blackfoot. He calls for cooperation between indigenous people and archaeologists and more controversially advocates that professionals "use archaeological method to support traditional knowledge."

Lawrence Loendorf tackles the history of avocational involvement in North American rock art research, arguing

that nonprofessionals stepped in to fill the void left when professionals ignored these highly visible sites. He calls for a spirit of cooperation to prevail over jealousies that have arisen as professional archaeologists have begun to reclaim this territory. James Keyser presents a similar argument concerning government sponsorship of rock art research, noting that legal requirements and public pressure called for government agencies to address research and preservation issues that academics were free to ignore. He highlights the disconnect between agencies' need for well-trained rock art specialists and academia's reluctance to provide them.

Perhaps the strongest article in the volume is Marvin Rowe's careful explanation of methods for radiocarbon dating painted rock art, methods he largely developed in his own lab, but which he presents critically and objectively.

Overall, this book will be of interest to rock art specialists and students, but it is not likely to reach a broader audience. This is unfortunate, because rock art research is ineluctably nudging its way into the public consciousness and into a reluctant academe. **Linea Sundstrom**, *Day Star Research, Shorewood, Wisconsin*.